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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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RICE BREAD OFFERS ONE ANSWER TO DIET PROBLEMS

Traditionally, when you think of bread...you think of wheat. But — suppose you have hypertension, inflamed kidneys or digestive difficulties, and wheat presents a health problem? Bread made from rice flour could be the solution.

However, — in order to make rice bread, a suitable ingredient was needed to act as gluten does in wheat bread — that is, to trap the leavening gases produced by the yeast during fermentation, thus allowing the dough to rise.

U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers at the ARS-Western Regional Center in Berkeley, Ca., have found that a gum, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, serves as an effective substitute for gluten.

People with hypertension, inflamed kidneys and/or certain digestive difficulties would benefit from the diets that include rice bread because rice contains low levels of sodium, protein, fat and fiber, and high amounts of easily digested carbohydrates.

Also, people whose small intestines react to certain proteins in wheat (causing pain and malabsorption of nutrients) can safely eat rice bread because rice does not contain these particular proteins. Thus, rice bread would provide these people with another food item adding more variety to their diets.

The USDA scientists learned that refined vegetable oils were more effective than fat for improving the overall quality of rice bread. Hydrogenated shortening and dough conditioners normally used in wheat breads to improve quality had the opposite effect on rice breads. Because high levels of oil can be used, caloric content can be increased, making the bread useful for people on certain restricted diets, such as modified protein diets.

Additional studies are being made to identify five varieties that have good baking properties and to develop a mix suitable for preparing rice bread at home.

A LAMB STEAK?

— WHY NOT?

New fabricated lamb steaks are on the way — made from nonprimal cuts — that is, briskets, necks and trimmings. They may even halt the downward trend in lamb consumption. Per capita U.S. consumption of lamb went from 4.8 pounds in 1960 to 2.0 in 1975.

Six items (made from nonprimal cuts of lamb meat) — developed for commercial demonstration — were frozen and made available to about 100 of the country's leading institutional volume food outlets. Some of the items were sectioned and formed into lamb patties, sausage and roast; shanks in barbecue sauce; cubes and curry.

Flaked and formed lamb steaks and sticks — breaded and unbreaded, also were available to institutional users. By flaking the nonprimal lamb meat, a homogenous consistency was obtained; thus the end products were uniform in texture, color and quality.

Some of these new products now are commercially available in certain areas of the country. Purveyors report institutional acceptance is good...and growing. There is definite interest in the product which should benefit American sheep and lamb ranchers...and — perhaps, reverse the long-term decline.

NEW SLIDE SERIES AVAILABLE

— ON POULTRY

Information for consumers on how to buy poultry by various classes, types, sizes and grades is included in the new slide series called "How to Buy Poultry" — an 80 frame color presentation available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Tips on home storage and cooking preparation also are covered in the series that sells for \$21.50 including a cassette and printed narrative guide. Cost of the filmstrip, with cassette and narrative, is \$12.50. The slide set may be ordered from the Photography Division, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. The filmstrip may be obtained from the Photo Lab, Inc. Department B, 3825 Georgia Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20050.

FOOD COST TRENDS — HERE AND ABROAD

Increases in the food price indexes in 15 countries from March 1975 to March 1976 ranged from a low 4.3 percent in the United States to a high of 628.2 percent in Argentina (where the Government's fiscal deficit is blamed for much of the increase.) West Germany, next lowest to the United States, had a gain of 6.4 percent during the 12 month period as reported by the Foreign Agriculture Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Of the increases in the food price index of six selected countries (United Kingdom, Japan, Italy, France, the United States and West Germany) the highest price gains were in the United Kingdom.

Meat prices were higher, generally, in 10 countries on May 5 than two months earlier. Poultry prices were higher in about half of the capitals...but in Washington, Brasilia, Canberra, London, and Rome, they were slightly lower in May than two months earlier. It must be noted that Government policies affect food prices as in the sharp food price increase in Argentina which were attributed to the ending of retail price controls.

FAS SURVEY OF RETAIL FOOD PRICES IN SELECTED WORLD CAPITALS, MAY 5, 1976
[U.S. dollars per lb or units as indicated, converted at current exchange rates]

City	Steak, sirloin, boneless	Pork, chuck, boneless	Pork chops	Roast, pork, boneless	Ham, canned	Bacon, sliced, p. 3d.	Broilers, whole	Eggs, dozen	Butter	Margarine	Cheese: Edam, Gouda, or Cheddar	Milk, whole, quart	Oil, cooking, quart	Tomatoes	Onions, yellow	Potatoes	Apples	Oranges, dozen	Bread, white, p. 3d.	Rice	Sugar
Bonn	4.48	3.03	2.49	3.75	(1)	3.08	0.88	1.00	1.58	0.72	1.74	0.43	1.61	0.51	0.46	0.29	0.25	1.76	0.42	0.64	0.27
Brasilia	.66	.44	.98	1.69	1.45	2.26	.52	.68	1.22	.50	1.25	.23	.64	.27	.30	.34	.09	.39	.35	.20	.11
Brussels	3.90	2.02	1.99	2.09	2.53	1.39	1.13	1.13	1.66	.07	1.88	.39	1.24	.89	.32	.25	.35	1.19	.30	.41	.23
Buenos Aires	.67	.29	.77	(1)	(1)	(1)	.34	.84	1.01	.45	.93	.20	1.30	.26	.09	.13	.12	.56	.21	.32	.33
Carberra	1.69	.76	1.60	(1)	2.17	2.48	1.02	1.13	1.08	.84	1.37	.40	1.61	.93	.35	.15	.40	1.19	.19	.31	.16
Copenhagen	4.97	2.33	2.70	3.00	2.45	2.54	.99	1.26	1.55	.47	1.39	.39	1.65	1.35	.67	.53	.44	2.49	.56	.49	.27
London	2.70	1.46	1.50	1.21	1.53	1.86	.55	.86	.69	.55	.95	.25	1.11	.62	.24	.32	.38	1.75	.18	.33	.20
Mexico City	1.45	1.34	1.45	1.84	2.96	1.95	.98	.76	2.03	1.03	3.70	.30	1.40	.29	.13	.24	.72	.33	.31	.38	.08
Ottawa	2.08	1.25	2.13	2.54	2.28	1.73	1.01	.94	1.18	.93	1.58	.58	1.84	.70	.26	.14	.50	1.33	.34	.54	.29
Paris	2.71	1.55	2.04	2.34	3.07	2.04	.83	1.25	1.57	.53	1.55	.34	1.14	.57	.45	.40	.29	2.14	.67	.29	.24
Rome	2.72	1.98	1.73	1.73	4.08	1.53	.94	1.08	1.58	.69	1.38	.29	.73	.47	.17	.35	.20	1.81	.34	.24	.23
Stockholm	5.17	2.93	2.35	4.10	2.87	3.07	1.46	1.52	1.41	.98	2.03	.32	4.30	1.27	.70	.20	.50	1.58	.85	.59	.33
The Hague	3.54	2.19	2.26	2.77	2.35	3.12	.73	.96	1.41	.44	1.67	.33	.85	.40	.31	.20	.17	1.03	.25	.37	.26
Tokyo	11.68	6.09	2.74	3.45	4.69	4.26	1.40	.96	2.07	2.03	1.92	.76	1.62	.78	.45	.25	.26	6.33	.42	.43	.42
Washington	1.72	1.24	2.02	1.67	2.55	1.82	.52	.68	1.19	.74	2.24	.48	1.62	.65	.26	.24	.45	1.15	.48	.36	.27
Median	2.71	1.55	2.02	2.34	2.53	2.15	.94	.96	1.41	.69	1.58	.34	1.40	.62	.31	.25	.38	1.19	.34	.37	.27

¹ Not available. Source: U.S. Agricultural Attachés.



How can you prevent cheese toppings from toughening and becoming hard while baking?

- Baking at low temperatures will keep the cheese topping from toughening and becoming hard, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture Home Economists.

How long can dry yeast and compressed yeast be stored?

- Dry yeast can be stored for several months if kept in a dry, cool place. Compressed yeast is perishable and should be stored in the refrigerator and used within a week.

When is the best time to purchase fresh vegetables?

- Fresh vegetables are generally highest in quality and lowest in price in season.

When making a cheese omelet, when should the the shredded cheese be added?

- Add the shredded cheese after the omelet is cooked — just before folding.

Should meat be seasoned before or after roasting?

- Meat can be seasoned before or after roasting but — either way seasonings penetrate very little below the surface of the meat.

What is the best way to keep fresh vegetables fresh?

- Most vegetables keep well and stay crisp if kept in a covered container or in plastic bags and stored in the refrigerator.

How can I get smooth gravy?

- The secret of making smooth gravy is to blend the flour thoroughly with the fat or cold liquid before combining it with hot liquid.

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